

## **Weston Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee**

**Wednesday, Jan 14th, 2015 Weston Town Hall Commission Room**

**Present: Ray Rauth, Julie Sidhu Guest: Cynthia Fowx**

**Chairman's Remarks:** Ray introduced our guest, Cynthia Fowx, Conservation Outreach & Devil's Den Preserve Manager. We are delighted to have Cynthia join us and learn about our mission and the hikes we have offered in Devil's Den over the past year. In the past the committee has focused largely on bike safety and bike education promotion. This year, although we are still focusing on bike safety, our immediate focus is on pedestrian and walker programs and safety.

Cynthia also shared with us that the trails in Katherine Ordway Preserve from Goodhill Road have been redone. Julie asked about bears in Devil's Den and bear education.

### **Special topic: Recruiting New Members**

Understandably, with several active children between them, three of our committee members chose not to seek another term. Therefore, we are in need of a recruitment drive to reach out to new members. Ray will write up something for The Weston forum and Julie will post on social media including our Facebook page.

**Events & Related: Weston Walks Program:** After the warm reception and success of our Weston Walks 2014 program, we have decided to continue with this for 2015. We will keep the previous walks and add a couple of new ones. Participation was mixed. Although some hikes had several residents participate, a couple only had 2-3. Low participation was mainly due to weather related issues or just that the program is so new. Many folks indicated to the committee that even though they did not make a hike or walk this year, they planned to do so in the future. There clearly is a need in town for walks and hikes for all ages. Many folks just do not know where to walk safely in town or do not want to walk alone. We believe that this program is beneficial to all town residents and will continue to grow.

We will also continue our collaboration with Weston Parks and Recreation Department and Weston Senior Center. This has been a successful partnership as it gives us a broad range of perspectives for all demographic groups in town. We are grateful for the continued support of Dave Ungar and Wendy Petty.

### **2015 Hike Program**

This year we have also been honored to include Tom Failla on our team. Tom is a long time Weston resident, has served on town committees, and has much knowledge of the terrain, trails and history of Weston. Tom's Rites of Spring, a 3 part hike in Devil's Den greatly enhanced our program along with a hike up to the Great Ledge. Ray also led an urban walk through Wilton and a hike on how not to get lost

in Devil's Den and Julie led a Bisceglie Park stroll through the fitness trail. This year we plan to continue these programs and add Trout Brook and Norwalk Valley Trail walks to the list.

Cynthia expressed a willingness to meet hikers at the start of any Den hikes and say a few words and/or accompany the group to offer knowledge if available. This year is the Devil's Den Centennial.

Julie and Ray are planning to walk the Fromson Strassler property and look at where it merges with Wilton preserves and proximity to Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT). A prior planned walk was thwarted by snow.

**Other business:** December minutes approved by Ray, seconded by Julie.

**Meeting adjourned:** 1:45p.m.